

# DDJC Cop Top Grad at Police Academy

Ruman Prasad, Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, CA (DDJC) Police Officer, just returned from spending 60 days at the Aberdeen Proving Ground Police Academy. According to Prasad, the course taught him everything he needed to know to be a good police officer. "It was tough, but rewarding," said Prasad.

He graduated at the top of the 35-member class, the largest class ever at the academy which is accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Activities. Prasad's 97.5 grade point average singled him out as the distinguished honor graduate. "I didn't even know there was an honor graduate," Prasad said. "There were some hard tests — like the Emergency Medical Technician exams, but the rest of it was fun."

Prasad was up at 5 a.m. for physical training and the day usually didn't end until 10 or 12 hours later. The course is packed with segments on law, high-speed vehicle pursuit, defense tactics, emergency medical training, and weapons training, just to mention a few.

The course was intense both physically and mentally. During one of the training exercises, the students were shot with pepper spray and then they had to fight off an assailant who tried to grab their holstered weapon.

"Then, they took us on a four-mile run," recalled Prasad. "And they didn't even let us wash the pepper spray off our face. We were running and our eyes were burning, but it prepared us for the situation if it should occur."

Prasad's favorite part of the course was on the firing range, except for one day when they were training with shotguns. "We carried the shotguns on a 45-minute run, did push ups and sit-ups with them and then the instructor put me on the range to shoot clay skeets," said Prasad. "My muscles and

arms were still shaking from the intense work out and it was difficult holding the shotgun steady. You are fatigued and don't have much in the way of motor skills. But, again it was part of the training to demonstrate how we would respond in a stressful situation like that."

Much of the training was academic studying laws, the scope of their jurisdiction and authority, and civil liabilities. However, the toughest course, according to Prasad, was the 40-hour class on Basic Emergency Medical Training. This included patient assessment, treating injuries or illnesses, and assisting childbirth. The course was given by the representatives from the state of Maryland.

"As a police officer, you are usually the first responder," he said. "You have to make important decisions in life threatening situations. The nine-week course was attended by a variety of law enforcement agencies from the Army and Defense Logistics Agency. According to Prasad, about one-third of the class were former state troopers or police officers.

Prasad doesn't hesitate to admit he is a better police officer as a result of the training. "I have more knowledge of the law, of my scope of authority and jurisdiction, and it sharpened my public relations skills," Prasad added.

"He is chief material," said Capt. Erik Stone, who runs the academy. "Prasad is highly motivated, well liked and respected by the other students and very knowledgeable."

Prasad served four years in the Navy as an aircraft mechanic, working on FA-18 Hornets, F-16 Tomcats and the A-6 Intruder. Prior to coming to DDJC, he worked for United Airlines at the Oakland Airport as an aircraft technician before being laid-off when air lines suffered cutbacks in the wake of the attack on the World Trade Center Sept. 11, 2001.

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